

Role Development Activities and Initial Teaching Performance

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Abstract:

This study's purpose was to examine the relationship between teacher role-development strength and the initial teaching performance of instrumental music student teachers. Subjects (N = 40) were asked to complete the Role Development Questionnaire (RDQ), a researcher-designed instrument for measuring one's commitment to the role of "music teacher." Initial teaching effectiveness was determined using the Survey of Teaching Effectiveness (STE) to evaluate subjects' videotaped teaching episodes that had occurred early in their practicum. No significant relationship existed between subjects' RDQ and STE scores. Additionally, no significant differences in role-development strength existed among those with differing levels of teaching performance.

Keywords: music teachers | role development

Article:

Researchers in the area of role development have found that people entering professions undergo transitional experiences as they become insiders to their professions (Carper, 1970; Rumbelow, 1968). Carper (1970) identified four specific categories in which such experiences can be organized. These role-development categories include: (a) Ownership of occupational title and identity, (b) Commitment to professional tasks and knowledge, (c) Identification with norms and values of the profession, and (d) Recognition of social position.

In instrumental music education, role development activities that have been found to enable students to take on the teacher role can also be classified using most of Carper's categories. Specifically, students learn to apply the moniker "teacher" to themselves over a period of time, often through experiences where others see and acknowledge them as teachers (L'Roy, 1983). Neophyte teachers learn to identify themselves in the teacher role during peer teaching in the university curriculum, in field experiences, and in private lesson teaching settings (Wolfgang, 1988). The repeated experience of being seen in the teacher role provides one with

the opportunity to assume ownership of occupational title and identity, Carper's first category. Preservice teachers demonstrate the second category, commitment to the professional knowledge of teaching, in a number of ways, including designing lessons, writing musical arrangements and marching band drills, conducting ensembles, and in demonstrating knowledge of the instruments in instructional settings (Broyles, 1997; Paul, 1998). Opportunities for taking on the norms and values of the profession, the third category, are many. Some of these opportunities include going to professional teacher conventions, being around and working with classroom teachers, and working with actual public school pupils in the teaching role (Raiber, 1997). Because preservice teachers are often not considered by the general public to be teachers, being recognized in the social position of teacher, the fourth category, is perhaps the most difficult and last for neophyte teachers to assimilate. All of the above-mentioned activities and experiences, reflective of the first three categories, have been found to strengthen the teacher role of those preparing to enter the profession. Fant (1996) found a positive correlation between the teaching effectiveness of student teachers in instrumental music and training experiences containing a feedback element. Receiving feedback, however, is just one activity that helps to develop commitment to professional tasks and knowledge, the second of Carper's categories. Is it possible, then, that persons with strong role identification for a group would become strong members of that group? Do preservice teachers who show strength in role development categories become more committed, and therefore, better teachers? The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between initial teaching performance and role development among undergraduate instrumental music student teachers.

Method

Subjects were instrumental music student teachers ($N = 40$) at seven universities during the spring semester, 1999. Because initial teaching performance was to be evaluated, subjects videotaped a teaching episode during the first three weeks of student teaching. Each subject taped at least 10 minutes of teaching in front of an entire class, and returned the tape to the researchers. Subjects also completed and returned the Role Development Questionnaire (RDQ).

Subjects' teaching performances were evaluated using the Survey of Teaching Effectiveness (STE), (Hamann & Baker, 1996), an evaluation instrument resulting in a numerical score that represents teaching effectiveness. The STE is comprised of two weighted categories, with "lesson delivery skills" (posture, eye contact, use of gestures, facial expression, and vocal inflection) being weighted 40% while "planning and presentation of lesson" (evidence of lesson planning, subject matter competence, pacing, sequential pattern rehearsal cycle, and teaching skills) is weighted 60%. Item evaluations under the two categories are accomplished using a Likert-type scale of 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent). Using the two categorical weighting factors, a final score can range from 10 to 50. Hamann, Lineburgh, and Paul (1996) established empirical validity for the STE ($r = .89$) using a procedure in which the adjudicators' initial rankings, not based on the STE, were compared to subsequent ranking based on an administration of the STE. In a test-retest procedure cited by Hamann (1995) the reliability of the STE was found to be $r = .83$. Strength of role development was measured by the Role Development Questionnaire (RDQ), created for this study (see Appendix A). Eight items were included to determine strength of occupational role. Subjects' response to each item was translated into a score ranging from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), resulting in an overall possible range of 8 to 40. Item content was based upon the findings of previous role development research in music education (L'Roy, 1983;

Wolfgang, 1990; Broyles, 1997; Paul, 1998) and was representative of the categories identified by Carper (1970).

Three judges evaluated the videotaped teaching episodes using the Survey of Teaching Effectiveness (STE). For each subject, a mean STE score was calculated by averaging the scores of the three judges. A Pearson product-moment correlation co-efficient was calculated to determine if a relationship exists between scores from the RDQ and STE scores. In addition, subjects' STE scores were ordered from lowest to highest, and categorized into low, medium, and high levels. A One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was calculated to determine if significant differences in role development existed among the three levels of teaching effectiveness.

Results

Two research questions were formulated for this study: (a) Does a relationship exist between role development strength and initial teaching effectiveness? and (b) Is there a difference in role development strength among those with high, medium, and low levels of initial teaching effectiveness? A series of Pearson product-moment correlation co-efficients were used to determine inter-correlation of the judges' STE scores. Reliability coefficients ranged from $r = .89$ to $r = .92$. No significant relationship was found to exist between scores from the RDQ and STE scores ($r = 0.022$; $p = 0.895$). Furthermore, no significant differences in role strength were found to exist among those demonstrating varying degrees of initial teaching effectiveness (see Table 1).

Table 1. Role Development AVOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> -level
STE Levels	65.1	2	32.6	2.50	0.097
Error	469.8	36	13.1		
Total	535.0	38			

Discussion

In this study, we found that the role development strength of undergraduate instrumental music education majors, determined by surveying them about their various role self-perceptions and role development activities, did not correlate with the effectiveness of their initial teaching performances. Students' answers to the "self-perception" questions were actually found to be at odds with initial teaching effectiveness. Furthermore, a number of students who were at the highest level on STE scores rated themselves as medium in role strength. Many of the medium STE performers rated themselves as high in role strength. Although not statistically significant, the mean score on the RDQ for those with a medium teaching performance was higher than those with a high teaching performance (see Table 2).

Table 2. Role Development Mean Scores and Standard Deviations

STE Levels	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
3 (High)	13	31.333	3.551
2 (Medium)	14	32.286	3.099
1 (Low)	13	29.231	4.146

The discrepancy of role strength with actual teaching performance was puzzling, and a hypothesis was advanced to explain the situation. It was possible that students with high scores were more reflective about their teaching abilities, a hypothesis inspired by the research of Fant (1997). He concluded that students became high performers in teaching effectiveness by repeated reflection upon their own performance in teaching activities. Such reflection could possibly result in students being very aware of their own improvement and need for improvement. This concept can be summarized with the common-sense saying, "the more you know, the more you know that you don't know." In further analyzing the data from this study, these high-performing students did have higher scores on the items related to role development activities (such as multiple teaching episodes with videotaped feedback) as opposed to self-perceptions (feeling prepared to teach). In another study, Paul, Teachout, Sullivan, Kelly, Bauer, & Raiber (2001) found a positive correlation between STE scores and Authentic-Context Learning (ACL) activities in instrumental music student teachers. The ACL activities were: (a) number of early field experience teaching episodes, (b) number of peer teaching episodes, (c) number of times that teaching videos were watched, and (d) number of times that teaching videos were watched with a coaching instructor. Perhaps self-reported perceptions are not as accurate as actual involvement in ACL activities when predicting of initial teaching effectiveness.

In looking for an answer to this seeming contradiction, we interviewed methods teachers of some students who reported high levels of role development activities and who had lower STE scores. We discovered that these high-RDQ, low-STE students were actually teaching in a variety of settings (instrumental, choral, and general music) during their teaching episodes. Some students were actually involved more in the teaching of general music classes than of instrumental music classes. Because the STE measurements had been taken on instrumental music teaching examples, we hypothesized that "just teaching" is not the same as "teaching in context." Furthermore, the idea of "authenticity" is a central role development idea. For people to become insiders to a group, they should be given multiple opportunities to practice the role defined by the group in context, in as realistic or authentic a situation as possible (Shibutani, 1967; Charon, 1992).

In summary, self-reported role perception does not seem to be correlated with initial teaching performance. Role development activities, however, seem to be promising predictors for initial teaching effectiveness (Paul, et al., 2001). The interesting question remains: What is the nature of the complex relationship among initial teaching ability, self-reported role strength, and role development (or ACL) activities? Furthermore, what is the relationship between initial teaching performance and success in a teaching career in instrumental music? We would suggest that a larger study of initial teaching effectiveness and role development strength be conducted, including students from a wider variety of universities and including all specialty areas (instrumental, choral and general music). In addition, longitudinal research needs to be done

comparing initial teaching performance and later success in music teaching. We do feel that answers to these problems hold great promise for the design of effective undergraduate teacher education programs in music.

Stephen J. Paul passed away unexpectedly in April 2001. The authors would like to dedicate this article in memorium to Steve.

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APPENDIX OMITTED FROM THIS FORMATTED DOCUMENT